

Message Text

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PAGE 01 DAMASC 06246 161637Z

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ACTION NEA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9601

INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN

AMEMBASSY BEIRUT

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV

USMISSION USUN

USIA WASHDC

DIA WASHDC

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TAGS: PFOR, SY, LE

SUBJECT: SEPTEMBER 16 SYRIAN MEDIA REVIEW

1. SEPTEMBER 16 AL-BAATH HEADLINED: "CONTINUATION OF POLITICAL CONSULTATIONS TO END LEBANESE CRISIS. PRES. ASAD CONTINUES DISCUSSION OF SITUATION WITH MUFTI KHALED. SARKIS MAKES PREPARATIONS FOR SWEARING-IN SESSION. AL-KHOLI: 'DRAMATIC CHANGES TO OCCUR SOON.'"

2. PRESS REPORTED PRES. ASAD HAD MET EVENING SEPTEMBER 15 WITH MUFTI HASSAN KHALED ACCOMPANIED BY MOHAMMED BARAKAT AND IZZAT HARB. MUFTI HAD EARLIER BEEN RECEIVED BY FONMIN KHADDAM. DURING COURSE OF DAY KHADDAM ALSO HAD MEETINGS WITH NLP REP DANY CHAMOUN AND SOVIET AMBASSADOR.

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PAGE 02 DAMASC 06246 161637Z

3. PRESS QUOTED NEWS REPORTS FROM BEIRUT THAT LIMITED

CLASHES HAD BROKEN OUT SEPT. 15 IN LEBANESE CAPITAL AND SUBURBS, AND THAT TRADITIONAL FIGHTING FRONTS IN MT. LEBANON HAD WITNESSED FIERCE ARTILLERY EXCHANGES. PRESS CARRIED NEWS AGENCY REPORTS OF FRANGIEH'S ANNOUNCED CABINET CHANGES FACTUALLY AND WITHOUT COMMENT. ARAB LEAGUE REP AL-KHOLI'S STATEMENT FOLLOWING HIS SEPT. 15 MEETING WITH SARKIS, IN WHICH HE ANNOUNCED THAT LEBANESE SITUATION WOULD SOON CHANGE DRAMATICALLY, WAS GIVEN PROMINENT TREATMENT.

4. LEAD EDITORIAL BY AL-BAATH EDITOR ATTACKED EGYPT IN FOLLOWING LANGUAGE: "I DO NOT KNOW HOW SADAT REGIME COULD POSSIBLY CONTRIBUTE TO SOLVING LEBANESE CRISIS, SINCE IT IS THE INSTIGATOR AND THE CRISIS IS AMONG FRUITS OF SINAI ACCORD...WE MUST BITTERLY ADMIT THAT ARAB NATION HAS BEEN TOTALLY PREOCCUPIED WITH LEBANESE INCIDENTS FOR LAST 18 MONTHS, SO MUCH SO THAT IT HAS ACTUALLY FORGOTTEN SINAI CRIME AND ENABLED ACCORD TO PROCEED UNNOTICED, AMERICAN SPYING STATION TO GO INTO OPERATION, AND ISRAELI GOODS TO BE SHIPPED THROUGH SUEZ CANAL. ALL THIS WAS GOING ON UNDER THE CHAOS OF ROCKET AND CANNON FIRE (IN LEBANON) EXACTLY THE WAY THE CONSPIRATORS WISHED."

5. SECOND AL-BAATH EDITORIAL, HEADLINED "PEACE FOR LEBANESE AND PALESTINIANS," STATED THAT NEED HAD BECOME INCREASINGLY APPARENT FOR DAMASCUS AND PALESTINIAN RESISTANCE TO RETURN TO ONE ANOTHER AS NATURAL ALLIES. DAMASCUS, ARTICLE STATED, "HAS CONSISTENTLY EXPRESSED ITS DESIRE THAT PALESTINIAN ENTITY STAY DISTINCT AND INDEPENDENT, STRONG, AND CAPABLE OF BENEFITTING FROM SYRIA'S DEFENSIVE CAPABILITY AND TO STAVE OFF LIQUIDATION ATTEMPTS BY EITHER ZIONIST ENEMY OR AMERICAN IMPERIALISM AND ITS AGENTS IN SOME ARAB COUNTRIES...DAMASCUS, IN SEEKING TO ESTABLISH PEACE IN LEBANON, WILL BRING PEACE TO THE PALESTINIANS AS WELL."

MURPHY

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